

Montreal and Ottawa
June 20, 2014

Kirsten Hillman
Chief Negotiator, Trans-Pacific Partnership
Associate Assistant Deputy Minister
Foreign Affairs and International Trade Canada
Associate ADM
111 Sussex Drive
Ottawa, Ontario K1N 1J1

Subject: Request for access and transparency in the TPP negotiating round in Ottawa

Dear Ms. Hillman,

It is our understanding that Canada will host the next negotiating round of the Trans-Pacific Partnership, including Chief Negotiators meetings, in Ottawa in early July.

Given that this is the first – and likely last – high-level round of the TPP negotiations which will be held in Canada, we believe that it is critical that Canada ensures and facilitates opportunities for civil society stakeholder engagement with negotiators during the Ottawa round of negotiations, as has happened in previous rounds hosted by other parties.

As Canadian and Quebecois organizations with constituencies which will be significantly impacted by many aspects of the TPP, we believe the opportunity for Canadian, Quebec and other stakeholders to provide input and expertise to negotiators must be part of the Ottawa round of TPP negotiations. To this end, we ask you ensure stakeholder engagement opportunities with negotiators by:

1. Releasing as soon as possible the details and full schedule of the Ottawa round and schedule of stakeholder events to enable stakeholders to plan travel with enough advance notice to allow for reasonably priced travel and accommodation.
2. Organizing a briefing from lead negotiators for stakeholders at both the start and end of the negotiating round, with call-in options available for stakeholders unable to participate in person.
3. Providing space and time for stakeholder presentations during a day and time when negotiations are not in session, with large enough rooms to accommodate all relevant negotiators. Stakeholders should be provided with a minimum of 15 minutes for each presentation.

4. Providing access for stakeholders to the venue where negotiations are taking place, including to corridors during coffee breaks.
5. Providing the opportunity for tables at a time when negotiations are not in session and not during the same time as stakeholder presentation sessions.
6. Ensuring that any reception for negotiators be open to all stakeholders to encourage informal interactions.
7. Making available Internet access for stakeholders at the venue, and work space for civil society stakeholders that includes tables, printers, and a photocopier.
8. Distribution of NGO stakeholder documents to delegations in a timely manner.

We would also like to reiterate once again the widespread concerns related to the general secrecy surrounding TPP negotiations. Despite the advanced stage of negotiations, to date there has been no public access to draft agreement texts or summaries, which severely limits meaningful input by civil society stakeholders in these important negotiations. This level of secrecy stands in stark contrast to the transparency of other multi-lateral negotiations, such as the Free Trade Area of the Americas and the WTO Doha Round.

We therefore echo the call of civil society groups from all negotiating countries for greater transparency in TPP negotiations, including providing public access to the negotiating texts.

We await your reply as soon as possible. Thank you for your prompt attention to this request, and please accept our best regards.

Contacts:

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Signatories:

Canadian Environmental Law Association
Canadian HIV/AIDS Legal Network
Common Frontiers
Council of Canadians
National Farmers Union
Open Media
Les Amis de la Terre de Québec

Association québécoise de lutte contre la pollution atmosphérique (AQLPA)

Centrale des syndicats du Québec (CSQ)

Coalition québécoise pour une gestion responsable de l'eau, Eau Secours!

Comité pour les droits humains en Amérique latine (CDHAL)

QUEBEC NETWORK ON CONTINENTAL INTEGRATION (RQIC)

Composed of the following organizations:

Alliance du personnel professionnel et technique de la santé et des services sociaux (APTS)

Alternatives

Association canadienne des avocats du mouvement syndical (ACAMS)

Attac-Québec

Association québécoise des organismes de coopération internationale (AQOCI)

Centrale des syndicats démocratiques (CSD)

Confédération des syndicats nationaux (CSN)

Conseil central du Montréal métropolitain-CSN (CCMM-CSN)

Fédération étudiante collégiale du Québec (FECQ)

Fédération des femmes du Québec (FFQ)

Fédération interprofessionnelle de la santé du Québec (FIQ)

Fédération des travailleurs et travailleuses du Québec (FTQ)

Mouvement d'éducation populaire autonome et d'action communautaire du Québec (MÉPACQ)

Réseau québécois des groupes écologistes (RQGE)

Syndicat de professionnelles et professionnels du gouvernement du Québec (SPGQ)

cc: Ed Fast, Minister for International Trade

Nadia Theodore, Director, TPP division, DFADT

M. Jacques Daoust, Ministre de l'Économie, de l'Innovation et des Exportations du Québec

M. Patrick Muzzi, Directeur de la Politique commerciale du Québec, MDEIE